

<b>Notice of Allowability</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	10/643,698	SONODA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Matthew J. Kohner	3653	

-- *The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--*

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1.  This communication is responsive to amendment of 3/13/06.
2.  The allowed claim(s) is/are 1 and 3-27.
3.  Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a)  All    b)  Some\*    c)  None    of the:
    1.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2.  Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
    3.  Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.  
**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4.  A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5.  CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
  - (a)  including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
    - 1)  hereto or 2)  to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (b)  including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of
 Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6.  DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

#### Attachment(s)

1.  Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2.  Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3.  Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),  
Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
4.  Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit  
of Biological Material
5.  Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6.  Interview Summary (PTO-413),  
Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
7.  Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8.  Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9.  Other \_\_\_\_\_.

**DETAILED ACTION*****Drawings***

The drawings were received on March 13, 2006. These drawings are corrections are approved. The replacement sheets are accepted.

**REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE**

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Applicant has amended the claims to overcome the objections of the Ex Parte Quayle action. Further, Applicant has amended the drawings to overcome the drawing objection of the Ex Parte Quayle Action.

Independent claim 1 requires a feeding means, a separating means for separating which abuts against the recording medium carried by the feeding means, a front stage regulating member for confining the number of sheets advancing to the separating means, and a supporting means which allows the feeding means to move between a position wherein the feeding means has a predetermined gap with the front stage regulating member and a second position where the feeding means contacts the front stage regulating member.

Independent claim 10 requires a pick up roller, a pressure plate, a separation roller for separating sheets in cooperation with the pickup roller, a guide means facing the pickup roller for guiding sheets advancing into the nipping portion, and a supporting means which allows the pickup roller to move between a position wherein the pickup

roller and the guide member are separated and a second position where the pickup roller contacts the guide member through the sheet.

US Patent No. 6,896,253 to Hanabusa is an example of prior art with similar structure such as a feed roller, separation roller, pressure plate, etc. However, Hanabusa does not disclose a movable feed roller. Instead, a cam mechanism is used vary positions of the feed roller to other parts of the device. However, the feed roller remains stationary.

US Patent No. 5,624,109 to Tanaka is an example of prior art in which the feed roller does move. However, the feed roller does move between a position in which it contacts a guide or front stage regulating member and a position where it does not contact the guide or front stage-regulating member.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

#### ***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims 1 and 3-27 are allowed.

#### ***Conclusion***

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew J. Kohner whose telephone number is 571-272-6939. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 9-5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gene Crawford can be reached on 571-272-6911. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

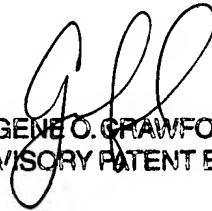
Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Matthew J. Kohner

Examiner

Art Unit 3653

mjk

  
GENE O. CRAWFORD  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER